



# THE IMPACT OF PRIVATE TUITION ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS AT ISC LEVEL: PERSPECTIVES FROM TUTORS IN SOUTH KOLKATA

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## ABSTRACT

Private tuition has become a significant component of the academic journey for many students, reflecting the increasing dependence on supplementary education across urban India. The researchers conducted the current study to gather the views of private tutors teaching at ISC levels to understand how private tuition enhances the quality of learning among students and to explore, from their perspective, the reasons behind students' willingness to opt for private tuition. This qualitative study collected data from 25 private tutors teaching in standard XI and XII at the ISC level in South Kolkata. To gather this information, the researchers conducted detailed telephonic interviews. The findings reveal that most tutors view private tuition as an effective tool for enhancing conceptual clarity, exam preparedness, and personalized learning, particularly in a context where classroom teaching often falls short in addressing individual needs. The study concludes that private tuition plays a crucial role in improving learning outcomes at the ISC level.

**KEYWORDS:** Students, Learners, Private Tutors, Private Tuition, ISC Level, Quality of Education, Learning

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Private tuition has its roots in ancient history when affluent families employed personal tutors to educate their children, particularly in ancient Greece and Rome. Over time, individual teaching has also become feasible due to the varying specific needs of learners. A report by Mishra (2024) indicates that as of 2021, 40% of children in India choose to attend tuition, with the percentage rising significantly in high school, where 83% of students participate in classes outside of school. Therefore, the current study centres on private tutors who teach at the ISC level to students from schools in south Kolkata, aiming to understand the reasons why students at this level seek private tuition from their viewpoints.

## 2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to a report by Hindustan Times (2023), the percentage of students seeking private tuition rose from 26.4% in 2018 to 30.5% in 2022. This trend indicates potential issues with the quality of education and learning in formal schooling, prompting children to turn to private tutoring services. The study aimed to explore this area, as it poses a growing concern and could provide insights into why private tuition has become a necessary option for learners at the ISC level in South Kolkata from the tutors' perspective.

## 3. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Research on private tuition reveals various insights into its prevalence and perceptions among students and parents. Salim (2013) identified that private tuition has become a common practice for many students. According to G. Ponselvakumar (2016), parents generally hold a positive view of private tuition, particularly at the higher secondary level. Furthermore, a study by Madhu and Bhattacharyya (2018) highlighted

notable differences in attitudes towards private tuition between rural and urban parents at the senior secondary school level. In the district of Hooghly, Mondal and Barman (2019) demonstrated a significant disparity in attitudes towards private tuition between male and female students. Additionally, Kaur and Singh (2023) found that a substantial majority of students perceive it as challenging to achieve decent grades without the support of private tuition.

## 4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

**O1:** To explore why private tutors believe private tuition is essential at the ISC education level.

## 5 RESEARCH QUESTION OF THE STUDY

**RQ1:** What makes private tutors believe that additional tuition is necessary alongside school education at the ISC level?

## 6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to explore the reasons why private tuition has emerged as a viable alternative for providing quality education to learners at the ISC (Indian School Certificate) levels, specifically from the perspective of tutors. By examining their insights and experiences, the research seeks to uncover the motivations behind the growing reliance on private tutoring and its perceived benefits in enhancing academic performance and comprehension among students.

## 7. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study employed a qualitative research methodology, highlighting the value of empirical exploration. Comprehensive data collection was undertaken to uncover key insights that underpin the study's conclusions. The information gathered significantly contributes to the development of a conceptual

framework, enriching our understanding of the topic. This approach enables a more detailed examination of the intricate and layered aspects of the research area.

### 7.1. Research Design

In this study, a qualitative research design has been utilized with the Descriptive Survey Method. This combined approach was followed by a thorough investigation of the topic, providing rich, detailed insights and effectively capturing the views and lived experiences of the participants.

### 7.2. Research Tool

The main data collection tool for this study is an interview schedule designed by the researchers in consultation with subject experts. Following a thorough review of existing literature, a set of 17 open-ended questions was formulated to elicit detailed and meaningful responses from participants.

### 7.3. Participants

The researchers have employed a purposive sampling technique, with inclusion criteria focusing on only 25 private tutors who are teaching students from ISC schools in South Kolkata, currently in standard XI or XII.

### 7.4. Data Collection and Data Analysis

The data collection involved interviewing private tutors, which was conducted via telephone. Segmenting and data visualization techniques were employed.

## 8. FINDINGS

The primary conclusions indicate that private tutors are utilizing private tuition as a superior platform for quality education, significantly outpacing school education. They encounter various obstacles that hinder students from receiving the same level of quality education in schools as they do through private tuition. One major issue is the lack of effective communication between schools and students, which is vital for achieving positive learning results. The student-teacher ratio contributes to the increasing demand for private tuition, as it offers a smaller ratio that minimizes distractions during learning. Students benefit from easier access to private tutors through the additional resources available to them, which enhances their confidence. Currently, learners are more focused on the quality of education, along with the existing competition for both current and prospective. As a result, private tutors suggest that at the ISC levels, learners prioritize private tuition more seriously than the traditional schooling system for optimal and effective learning.

## 9. Discussions

The research on private tutors uncovers a range of teaching experiences and methods across different subjects and student requirements. Tutors possess teaching experience that varies from 2 to 45 years. They instruct a broad spectrum of subjects in private tuition, including Accountancy, Mathematics, English, Hindi, Biology, History, Geography, and more. Some tutors are specialized in teaching all subjects up to Class X, while others concentrate on specific streams like Commerce for XI-XII. The majority of tutors prefer to conduct sessions at

their locations, though some offer the flexibility to teach both at their premises and the student's home. One-on-one and group teaching formats are commonly utilized. Private tutors often identify specific subjects as needing extra assistance due to their complexity and the requirement for personalized attention, such as Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry, which are viewed as conceptual subjects that necessitate thorough understanding, problem-solving skills, and consistent practice. English is also highlighted for enhancing comprehension, sentence structure, and language skills. Subjects like Accountancy and Economics demand regular practice due to their logical and intricate nature. Geography and Political Science require extensive guidance. The necessity for private tuition often hinges on the individual student's needs, particularly for subjects needing conceptual clarity, logical reasoning, and ongoing practice. Generally, History and languages (like Hindi and Bengali) are perceived as not requiring private tuition since they can often be studied independently. Private tutors provided several explanations for why students opt for private tuition, including individual attention, clarity in concepts, resolution of doubts, pacing, practice, exam preparedness, and supplementing school education. They believe that while textbooks are important, they may not always effectively serve students due to challenging language or excessive details, necessitating further clarification from teachers or tutors. Some tutors concentrate on developing foundational concepts for learners rather than merely providing specific study materials, as they believe a clear grasp of the subject will enable students to tackle any questions. Most tutors do offer study materials, which students often find easier to comprehend than textbooks or school lectures. These materials tend to focus on exam-centric content, providing step-by-step solutions and regular practice opportunities. Some students require suggested questions or additional exercises to reinforce their learning. The study materials provided in private tuition are typically more accessible and student-focused, offering clearer explanations, practical examples, and tailored content to suit individual learning needs. Tutors also give advice on topic choices, organization, and presentation, supplying content, resources, and occasionally images for assignments. Responses regarding whether students learn more effectively in private tuition than in school show a range of opinions. Private tuition facilitates one-on-one interaction, enabling students to receive individual attention and address their doubts, which can be challenging in overcrowded school classrooms. In schools, large class sizes and limited teaching time can impede thorough discussions, while private tuition allows for more focused and adaptable learning. Salim (2013) discovered that the educational performance of students, which was assessed through their exam results, indicated that those undergoing private tuition performed better than their peers, aligning somewhat with the findings of this current study. G. Ponselvakumar (2016) examined parental perceptions of private tuition at the higher secondary level, while this work is centred on private tutors' perspectives. Madhu and Bhattacharyya (2018) found that parents from a high socio-economic background had a more favourable attitude towards private tuition at the senior secondary level compared to those from a lower socio-economic background. In the present study, the focus was not on socio-economic distinctions but rather on

the viewpoints of private tutors. Mondal and Barman (2019) researched the attitudes of secondary school teachers and students towards private tuition in the Hooghly district using a descriptive survey approach, but this study concentrated on the role of private tutors. Kaur and Singh (2023) indicated that most students find it quite challenging to achieve decent grades without tuition, a conclusion that resonates with the findings of the current work, as emphasized by private tutors.

## 10. CONCLUSION

In this study, the authors examined private tutors who educate ISC-level students from schools in South Kolkata to uncover the motivations behind students choosing private tutoring at the ISC level in this area. Private tutors prioritize tuition well ahead of the traditional school system, positioning it as a hub for quality education. Students pursue private lessons to receive tailored attention, enhanced comprehension, exam preparation, and support that is often lacking in crowded school environments. The effectiveness of private tuition is frequently attributed to its individualized approach. Numerous tutor provide extra knowledge beyond the standard curriculum. Factors such as large class sizes, limited instructional time, and the anxiety of asking questions in school contribute to students seeking private tuition for a more relaxed and thorough learning experience.

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